Caring for Survivors Act of 2020 aims to better support disabled veterans’ families

On Tuesday, May 19, 2020, The Caring for Survivors Act of 2020 (H.R.6933) was introduced in the House. This bill would increase dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) for surviving dependents and would lower the threshold of eligibility to allow certain survivors to receive this benefit who currently do not meet the requirements. This measure would:

- Increase the DIC rate to make it more equitable with rates provided to federal civilian employee survivors. This bill increases DIC so that the base rate of DIC is equal to 55% of the rate of compensation paid to a totally disabled veteran.
- Ease the 10-year rule for eligibility and replace it with a graduated scale of benefits that begins after five years and increases by percentage until reaching full amount at the 10-year mark. If a veteran is rated as totally disabled for five years and dies as a result of a non-service-connected cause, a survivor would be entitled to 50% of total DIC benefits. This scale continues until the 10-year threshold and the maximum amount of DIC benefit is awarded.
- Reduce the age allowed for a surviving spouse to remarry and maintain their benefits from 57 to 55, consistent with other Federal survivor programs.

The bill’s sponsors and supporters, unable to attend an in-person event due to social distancing requirements imposed by the COVID-19 outbreak, hosted a virtual bill introduction to highlight this important piece of legislation. View the video below: